



Office of the
Vice Provost
for Research
and Advanced
Studies

Office of
Biotechnology

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Compliance: Biohazards and Public Health

The 1986 Federal Register required all institutions to form a biosafety committee to oversee research involving recombinant DNA. The responsibility of the biosafety committee was later expanded to include all potentially hazardous biological materials, including recombinant DNA, transgenic plants or animals, infectious agents (human or animal), and biological toxins such as tetanus toxin or aflatoxin. The following information describes the activities of ISU's Biohazards and Public Health Committee (BPHC).

Responsibilities of the Biohazards and Public Health Committee

The BPHC reviews and sets conditions for conducting research that involves recombinant DNA or transgenic animals; reviews programs involving biological safety and public health protection at ISU; and sets policies that comply with federal, state, and local regulations and recommendations. These responsibilities include assessing the adequacy of laboratory facilities, containment and safety practices; the appropriate training and expertise of project personnel; and compliance with all applicable regulations. In addition, the University must report any significant problems, violations, accidents, or illnesses associated with recombinant DNA usage to the Federal Office of Biotechnology Activities.

Application and Authorization

The Application for Use of Recombinant DNA, Infectious Agents, or Biological Toxins must be completed and submitted to the Biosafety Officer prior to conducting research with potentially hazardous biological materials. The Biosafety Officer will conduct the initial review and then forward the application to the BPHC committee members.

The project will be either approved as is, approved with special conditions that need to be met, or denied. If the project is not approved, a written notification will be provided that explains the decision and identifies possible conditions or modifications to the project that would make it acceptable.

For projects that require approval of both the BPHC and the Committee on Animal Care (COAC), a single application may be filed, the COAC Protocol Review Form, including appropriate biohazardous agents section(s). The single application is submitted to the COAC, but gets reviewed by both committees. Separate approval authorizations are issued from each committee.

Annual Renewal

All applications authorized for approval must be renewed annually, up to a total of five years. The principal investigator will receive a reauthorization form 60 days before the authorization anniversary date. After five years, a new application must be submitted.

Reminder: The use of animals in a research project requires additional approval from the ISU Committee on Animal Care and the use of human subjects in a research project requires approval from the ISU Institutional Review Board.

Contact Information: Additional information about BPHC policies and procedures can be found at: <http://www.ehs.iastate.edu/bs/bphc.htm>. For questions, please contact Julie Johnson, Biosafety Officer, at jajohns@iastate.edu, 294-7657.

If you have any questions about this tip sheet or working with industry, please contact: Lisa Lorenzen, 1210 Molecular Biology Building, Phone: (515) 294-0926, Email: llorenze@iastate.edu

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http://www.biotech.iastate.edu/Industrial_resources/tip_sheets/tip_sheet_index.html